Captured Cuban Exiles Tell of Plot to Kill Castro

STL. GLOBE DEMOCRAT

By Associated Press

HAVANA—Two captured anti-Castro commandos told a news conference Sunday they carried bullets tipped with potassium cyanide in a plot to kill Prime Minister Fidel Castro.

The twowere among six captured Cuban exiles the Cuban government put on display at an extraordinary news conference lasting more than three hours. All six said they were recruited and trained by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in Florida.

POISON BULLETS

Details of the plot against Castro were not given. But two of the captives said assassination of Castro was part of their mission. Bullets coated with the deadly poison were among the captured arms, Cuban authorities said.

The carefully elicited admissions were made before delegates to the Havana conference ofrevolutionaries from 27 Latin-American countries and visiting United States newsmen. The performance obviously added spice to the meetingof the Latin American Organization of Solidarity-OLAS.

It also apparently was aimed at offsetting Venezuelan charges that Cubans landed guerrillas near Caracas, Venezuela, in May.

The Communist party newspaper Granma called the prisoners' admissions "proof of the crimes that imperialism makes against Cuba."

Under questioning by three Cuban army officers, two of the exiles said they were agents of the CIA. In addition, four men captured July 18 were displayed with the arms and explosives the Cubans said they carried for terror and sabotage.

Cuban authorities said they also had arrested in fifth man, identified as Placeo Hernandez. They said he was shot and wounded while resisting arrest and he was not at the news conference.

In Miami the militant anti-Castro exile group, Second Front of Escambray, said the men captured in Cuba were guerrillas from their organization.

Andres Nazario, secretary general of the Second Front, said the expedition left for Cuba nearly four weeks ago.

"They were going to infiltrate

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Cuba on a mission of subversion and guerrilla warfare and were going to join up with patriots inside Cuba," Nazario said.

The military commander of the Second Front group, Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo, was captured in Cuba two years ago after infiltrating on a similar mission. He was succeeded as commander in Miami by Armando Fleites.

Fleites said, "The objective of this mission most certainly was to kill Castro."

He said five members of the Second Front infiltrated Cuba landing July 18 and said the fifth either escaped or was being withheld from the public by the Castro regime.

Fleites declaned to comment further pending a news conference later in the week.

The six prisoners were said to have lived in Miami but to have operated out of Tampa, Naples and Key West, Fla. All six said they were trained and recruited by the CIA.

Cuban authorities said the four men who brought arms to Cuba were captured July 18 near Honda Bay in westernmost Pinar del Rio Province. They were identified as Jose Roy Rodriguez, Alberto Lauceria Diaz, Francisco Avila Azcuy and Pablo Garcia Roqueta. They said they were members of the Second Front.

Cuban army Lt. Jose Hamel identified one alleged CIA agent as Vincente P. Gonzales Migoyo and said he was captured Saturday in Matanzas Province.

The other alleged CIA agent was identified as Jose Rabel Nunez, a Cuban government defector reported captured Sept. 4, 1965.

All except Rabel were dressed in what Cuban authorities described as "counter-revolutionary uniforms." Rabel wore civilian clothes.

The prisoners appeared frightened at the outset of the conference but managed a few smiles during the more than three hours of questioning. They said they did not know if they were going to be shot.

Newsmen were permitted to question the six.

Although their stories were confusing and conflicting at times, it soon became apparent that the two men alleged to be CIA agents were accused of different operations.